

**Proclamation 7486—White Cane  
Safety Day, 2001**

*October 15, 2001*

*By the President of the United States  
of America*

**A Proclamation**

National White Cane Safety Day, observed annually on October 15, is a day of special significance for blind and visually impaired Americans because it represents a declaration of freedom. It also signifies a commitment by the sighted community to improve access to basic services for blind and visually impaired persons.

The familiar “white cane” is recognized as a tool of independence that enables the blind and visually impaired to participate in the facets of daily life. The core principles of our country promise freedom, justice, and hope; and these principles should guarantee the opportunity for every disabled American to live full and productive lives. The new millennium brings with it a renewed pledge to ensure that no citizen is prevented from realizing the American dream because of a disability.

Eleven years ago, when the Americans with Disabilities Act was enacted into law, America opened its doors to a new age of access for people with disabilities. To build on this landmark civil rights law, I have launched the “New Freedom Initiative,” which is intended to ensure that all Americans with disabilities can participate more fully in the life of their communities and of our country. As part of this initiative, my Administration has asked the Congress to increase significantly Federal funding for State low-interest loan programs, so Americans with disabilities can purchase new assistive technologies. To help researchers continue to develop these types of helpful technologies, we have asked the Congress to increase Federal investment in assistive technology research and development. All Americans must work together to break down barriers and obstacles that may impede the progress of individuals with disabilities; and we must provide them with ever greater access to the workplace and public transportation.

The Congress, by joint resolution approved on October 6, 1964, has designated October 15 of each year as White Cane Safety Day. I call upon every American to observe this day by joining with me in working to open the doors of opportunity further and making the American dream a reality for all blind and visually impaired citizens of our Nation.

**Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush,** President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim October 15, 2001, as White Cane Safety Day. I call upon public officials, educators, librarians, and all the people of the United States to observe this day with appropriate ceremonies, activities, and programs.

**In Witness Whereof,** I have hereunto set my hand this fifteenth day of October, in the year of our Lord two thousand one, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-sixth.

**George W. Bush**

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., October 16, 2001]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on October 17.

**Remarks on America’s Fund for  
Afghan Children**

*October 16, 2001*

Thank you all very much. Last week I asked America’s children to send a dollar to the White House to help provide food and medicine to the children of Afghanistan. Today I’m pleased to report that in just a few short days, children all across our country have responded with remarkable generosity and deep compassion.

I want to thank Dr. Healy for doing such a fine job as the president of the American Red Cross. I’m proud to be your chairman. And I want to thank Kristen. In my speech to the country the other night, I said, “Why don’t you go out and mow a lawn or do somebody a favor to earn a dollar.” Never did I think feeding chickens would be part—*[laughter]*—but she fed so many chickens, she told me, she raised \$45 for the children of Afghanistan. Good job.

I want to thank Marty Evans, the national executive director of the Girl Scouts of the United States of America for being here. And I want to thank all the Girl Scouts who are here. I want to thank Robbie Callaway, senior vice president of government relations of the Boys and Girls Clubs. And I want to thank the Boys and Girls Clubs. Steve Culbertson, the president of the Youth Service of America—I want to thank Steve for being here. I want to thank my friend, Mike Farris, for being here. He's the chairman and general counsel of the Home School and Legal Defense Association. Mike, on behalf of the home schoolers, thank you for being here.

And I saw a pretty familiar face, Congressman Chris Shays. Congressman, thank you. I'm so glad you're here. Thank you for coming. I appreciate you coming, Chris. I know you wouldn't be here if you didn't join all the children around the country for doing what's right.

Let me tell you, since Friday, we've had 90,000 pieces of mail—90,000—have arrived at the White House. Dr. Healy, the American Red Cross, working with the U.S. Agency for International Development, are making sure that every dollar, every single dollar that's been raised by the boys and girls of America will be spent on the needs of the boys and girls in Afghanistan.

For the people that work hard either feeding chickens or going door to door or having bake drives, you can rest assured that Dr. Healy is going to make sure the money goes where we want the money to go.

Winter arrives early in Afghanistan. It's cold, really cold, and the children need warm clothing. And they need food, and they need medicines. And thanks to the American children, fewer children in Afghanistan will suffer this winter.

The children have donated the dollars because they understand a couple of things. They understand how fortunate we all are to live in America. We're really lucky people to live in this country. They also understand that some people their own age can suffer, and we don't want them suffering.

There has been some amazing stories—I want to share some of them with you. It's just the beginning, by the way, of the stories

that we'll all be able to share, all across America.

A guy works for me named Mitch Daniels, from Indianapolis, Indiana. He helped start a place called The Oaks Academy. It's an inner-city school. They've got 163 students that go to that little school. He came back from visiting his family the other day with \$163. Every child gave a dollar in that school. Jordan Fisher, a sixth grader at The Oaks Academy, wrote this in a letter; she said, "We feel sorrow for the children that the Taliban has hurt, and we're willing to do anything we can to help them have food to eat."

That's such a beautiful spirit, and it's so important that our boys and girls of America understand that when you share with somebody else, it not only enriches your life, it enriches the life of our entire Nation. Everybody can make a contribution in the war against evildoers. And by helping a child in Afghanistan—is a very important contribution.

Some students right here in Washington were among the first to respond. The student council at Amidon Elementary School in Washington organized their fellow students to donate dollars. They heard the call, and there was organization right off the bat. That means people were getting other people to go raise dollars on behalf of the Afghan children.

Students at Crestwood Elementary—and I see some of their representatives right here on the front row—in Springfield, Virginia, donated—now, catch this—\$2,000 from their annual fundraiser to the America's Fund for Afghan Children. I want to thank you all for coming, and thank you for your generosity.

The other day, Laura, my wife, spoke at Birney Elementary School in Washington, and the students there presented her with \$172 in donations. Home schooled students are sending in dollars. Youth Service America, the Boys and Girls Clubs of America, Big Brothers, Big Sisters, and other youth groups are all raising money.

I see the Scouts who are here. I can't think—we've got to have a merit badge—[laughter]—made especially for this occasion, to make sure that Scouts all across America, Boys and Girl Scouts, Cubs and Brownies, raise money.

You know, there's a lot of focus on our soldiers, and we're so proud of our soldiers. But there are other ways to be in the army, and one way is to show the goodness of America. One way to fight evil is to fight it with kindness and love and compassion.

And what an amazing contrast it is for our children to help children in need in Afghanistan. It points up how ugly and repressive the Taliban Government is of Afghanistan. And the message stands in stark contrast to the message of hate that our boys and girls have seen on TV, a message, frankly, that's hard for a lot of our kids in America to understand. Why would somebody hate so badly that they would fly airplanes to take a life? Why? Why is it that people send ugly things through the mail?

And my answer is: There's evil in the world, but we can overcome evil. We're good. We're good-hearted people, and the boys and girls of America are showing the world just that. We don't fight a religion. No, we fight evil. We respect the Muslim culture. We know Islam is a religion that teaches love and peace and compassion. No, our struggle is against evil people—evil people that claim they're religious but are not.

And I also want the boys and girls to know that while you're helping, our Government is doing everything we can to make America safe. We're doing everything we can to find anybody who wants to hurt you, to bring them to justice. We're doing everything we can to respond to any act that may take place in our country. I know some boys and girls worry, but by going out to raise money to help others, it'll help ease the worry and set such a good example for everybody else to see.

So I want to thank not only the boys and girls here, who have worked so hard in the DC area, but the boys and girls from all across the country who have heard the call to love a neighbor just like you would like to be loved yourself.

Thank you very much for coming. May God bless your works, and may God continue to bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:34 p.m. in the main lobby of the American Red Cross headquarters. In his remarks, he referred to Dr. Bernadine Healy, president and chief executive

officer, American Red Cross, and Kristen Strickland, an 11-year-old home schooled student from Virginia.

## **Executive Order 13231—Critical Infrastructure Protection in the Information Age**

*October 16, 2001*

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, and in order to ensure protection of information systems for critical infrastructure, including emergency preparedness communications, and the physical assets that support such systems, in the information age, it is hereby ordered as follows:

### **Section 1. Policy.**

(a) The information technology revolution has changed the way business is transacted, government operates, and national defense is conducted. Those three functions now depend on an interdependent network of critical information infrastructures. The protection program authorized by this order shall consist of continuous efforts to secure information systems for critical infrastructure, including emergency preparedness communications, and the physical assets that support such systems. Protection of these systems is essential to the telecommunications, energy, financial services, manufacturing, water, transportation, health care, and emergency services sectors.

(b) It is the policy of the United States to protect against disruption of the operation of information systems for critical infrastructure and thereby help to protect the people, economy, essential human and government services, and national security of the United States, and to ensure that any disruptions that occur are infrequent, of minimal duration, and manageable, and cause the least damage possible. The implementation of this policy shall include a voluntary public-private partnership, involving corporate and nongovernmental organizations.

**Sec. 2. Scope.** To achieve this policy, there shall be a senior executive branch board to coordinate and have cognizance of Federal